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STUDIES AND SKETCHES BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.

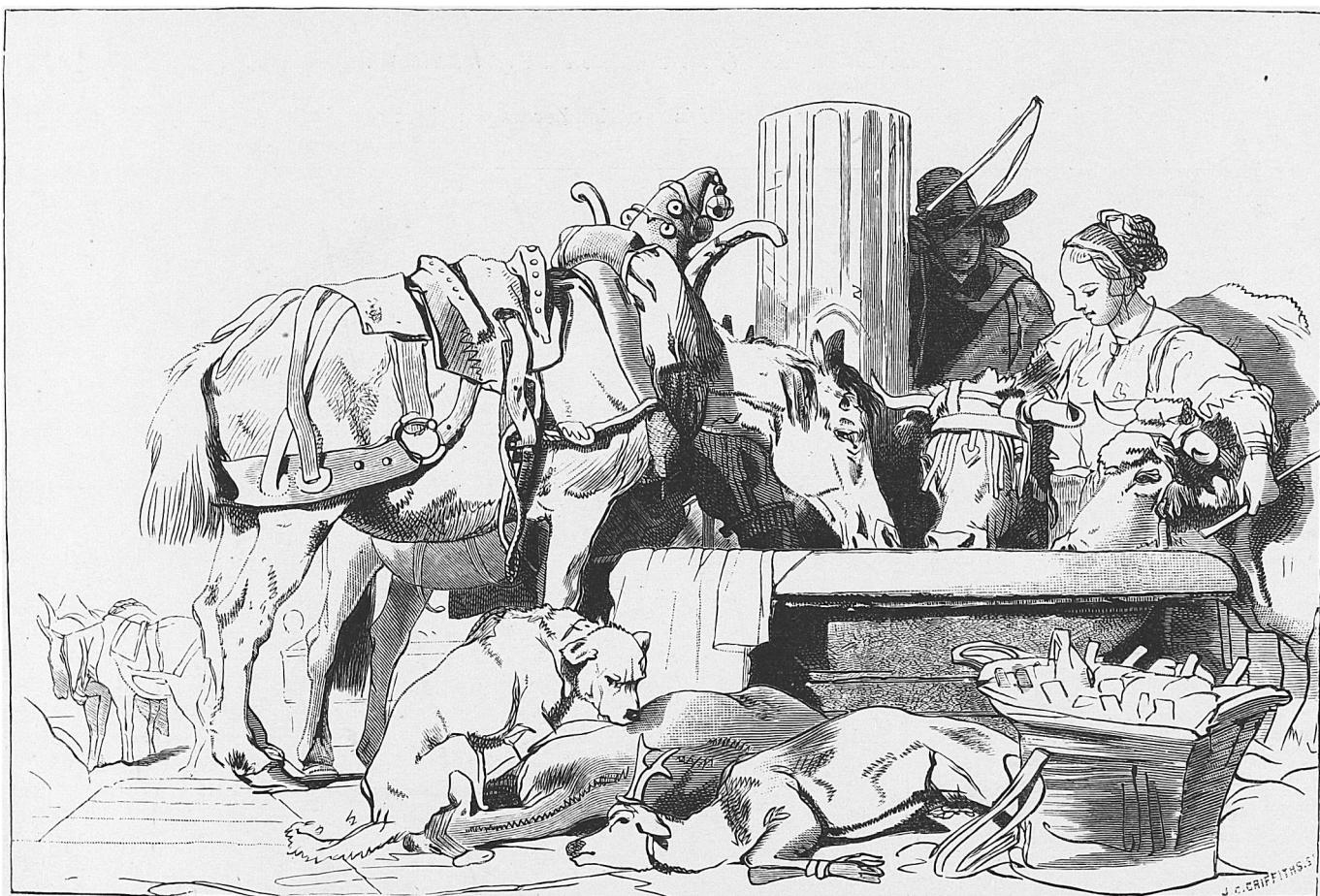


O whatever use Landseer applied the sketches he made when visiting Geneva, there is no evidence, so far as our recollection serves, of his ever painting one of them as a subject, picturesque as they unquestionably are. He seems to have made these drawings as much, if not more, for the interest he felt in the scenes than

for any implied purpose of transferring them to canvas: and it would also appear that occasionally he made fanciful additions to them, as in 'The Fountain,' engraved on this page, from a sketch outlined with a pen and shaded with sepia. These continental fountains are often not only places of refreshment for animals, but of gossip also for those who have charge of the quadrupeds: and here, while a girl has brought her cows to the

water, and stands between them with an arm lovingly round the neck of each, a young carter, or driver of some vehicle, leaves his horses to exchange greetings with, or perhaps to pay a pretty compliment to, his female companion at the fount. What seems to us as out of place in the composition are the two deer; whether they are dead or alive it is not easy to determine; presumed dead, yet if so why are the legs tied up? and how came they at all in such a place and in such company? One can only class this very attractive sketch with the fanciful.

The study, in chalk, of the 'Hinds' Heads,' belonging to the Duke of Westminster, shows wonderful truth of drawing and living expression; while the manner in which the heads are worked up exhibits very careful manipulation, and yet without any apparent effort. Beneath this engraving is another from a



The Fountain: Geneva (1840).—Lent by Messrs. Agnew.

sketch as completely out of Landseer's line, one would naturally say, as would be the 'Virgin in the Clouds,' or any other kindred subject. The drawing is very little larger than the engraved copy, and is executed with chalk, apparently rubbed in with the finger, pen and ink being used to express forms both in the foreground and in the distance: little spots of colour are

"dabbed," as it were, on some of the figures, which are most undefined in drawing, as in fact is the whole landscape. The charm of the sketch is found in the sky, which has a most magical effect; a heavy cloud passes in front of a soft misty stretch of sunlight, producing a result equally singular and beautiful, and far beyond the power of any wood-engraving to

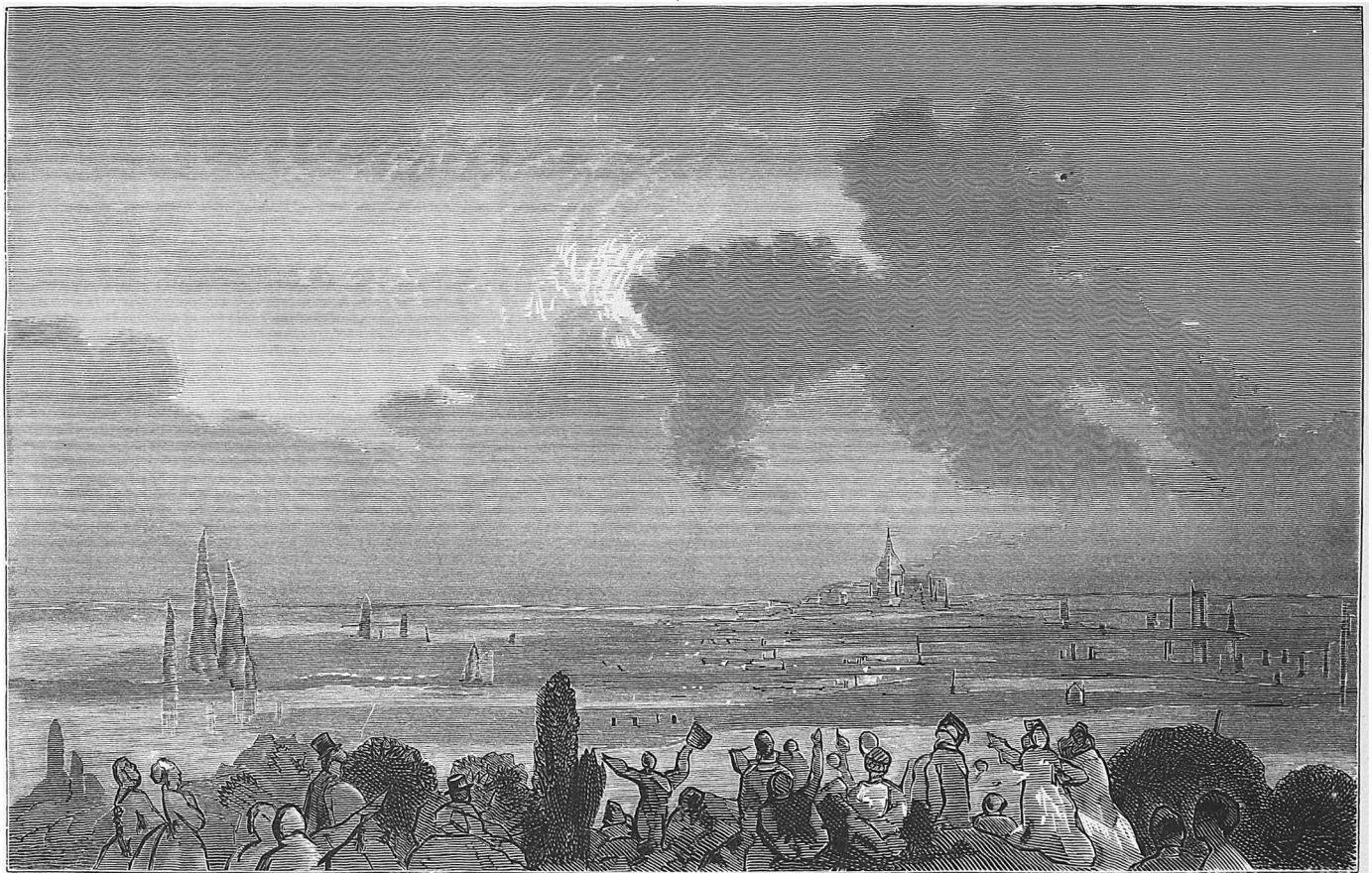
imitate, though we give a near approach to it in our example. Where Landseer made his sketch is uncertain, but that it is

intended to represent a race of some kind is evident enough by the demonstrations of the crowd of people in the foreground.



Hinds' Heads.—Lent by his Grace the Duke of Westminster.

Then there is the difficulty of determining whether the race is on land or water: there are shadowy objects which might serve



A Race-Course.—Lent by Mrs. Noseda.

to support either theory, yet nothing that can be accepted as decisive, unless the distant church may be so regarded, and this

is suggestive of the locality being the race-course at Doncaster. We have no definite clue to the scene of the 'Waterfall,' a

highly-finished sketch in oil-colours, rather small in size: the materials of the composition are most picturesquely arranged, and are brought together with judgment, and a thorough knowledge of what is required in the way of light and shade and colour to produce effect, while giving to each part of the subject its own proper place. Here, as in most of his landscapes, Landseer

clothes nature with more of brown than of green in her dress; and this causes them to look heavy, and to lose any transparency they would probably have under different treatment. It is singular that in his pictures where the landscape forms only a kind of background to figures and animals, we find he generally adopted both a lighter and brighter scale of colouring.



A Waterfall.—Lent by John Fowler, Esq., C.E.

If Sir Edwin had been accustomed to make notes of his "experiences" on his travels and sketching expeditions, he would unquestionably have left behind him many very interesting and amusing stories, and we should probably have heard under what circumstances he became acquainted with the juvenile who is 'Sitting for a Portrait.' It must have been a sudden fancy—

possibly from seeing the bairn so seated—that induced him to sketch her; or perhaps, in a humorous moment, he posed her thus *gracelessly* for an artistic joke: but whatever its origin, it is a very clever drawing—in lead-pencil. The head of a baby child is on the same sheet of paper.

'Looking Out,' another of the sketches kindly lent to us by

Mr. H. G. Reid, is also a pencil-drawing. The woman, bare footed, has brought her child down to the waterside, and has her eyes fixed on the distance, as if watching for some one. There

is a basket in front of the child containing something too indefinite to determine. The figures are capitally drawn, are easy in attitude, and well grouped; but there is no special story in



Sitting for a Portrait.—Lent by Frederick A. Milbank, Esq., M.P.

them, that we can make out, beyond what has just been said. In earlier pages of this series reference has been made to the versatility of Landseer's talents, which seem to have been able

to range through nature, both animate and inanimate, almost at will, and with almost equal success; though no one would ever speak of him as a great figure-painter. The diversity of his



Looking Out.—Lent by H. G. Reid, Esq., Middlesbrough.

pencil is far more exemplified in his sketches and studies than in his finished pictures, which, for the most part—and especially after he had become popular and famous—consist of the same

"class," as a botanist would be apt to define them, yet divided into *genera*. The six engravings on these pages show how practically unlimited was the range of his studies. J. D.